Take F133
Sakata F043

The conical huts are not arranged in family groupings, but are built along an irregular double line. The free space between the two rows of huts forms the principal artery of the village, and the whole assemblange is surrounded by luxuriant plantings of banana trees and manioc.

The dwellings of the Baboma, Wadia, Mosengere, and all the peoples along the right shore of Lake Leopold II and the Fimi have the same appearance: rectangular base; roof with an oblique double slope, horizontal ridge; triangular gable; veranda formed by the projection of the roof from one to one and a half meters beyong the façade which faces the chief artery of the village; and an entrance through this same wall with a raised, sliding door.

The furnishings of all these huts are in general limited to

Fig. 26. Baboma Hut for the Nkisi of the Hunt. In background, Basonge type hut with conical roof and square base.

kitchen utensils and a storage place in the first room and to the bed in the sleeping chamber. The bed is built on stakes from 30 to 50 centimeters high. Mats serve as a mattress, and the pillow consists of a crude wooden block which has hardly been squared, except among the Baboma who still use the small stool-pillow that we found among the Banfumu-Bateke.

All the peoples of this region build their huts with great care. After carefully marking the area of the new site, the native drives

1:Maes--33 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32
Yaelima

as the roof. The natives of the Bumbuli region usually build their huts quite carelessly. Although their villages are remarkably clean, the general appearance suffers a great deal from the shabby state of most of the dwellings. Even quite new huts are poorly finished, compared to those of other regions.

The furnishings of Batitu and Yaelima huts do not differ from those of other regions, except in the shape of the utensils and the presence of chairs. The bed is always very low, raised barely 10 or 15 centimeters from the ground. The interior of the hut is only very rarely lined with mats. Among the furnishings one should note the large drying basket which serves as a storage place and which is hung above the hearth. It is hexagonal in shape, and

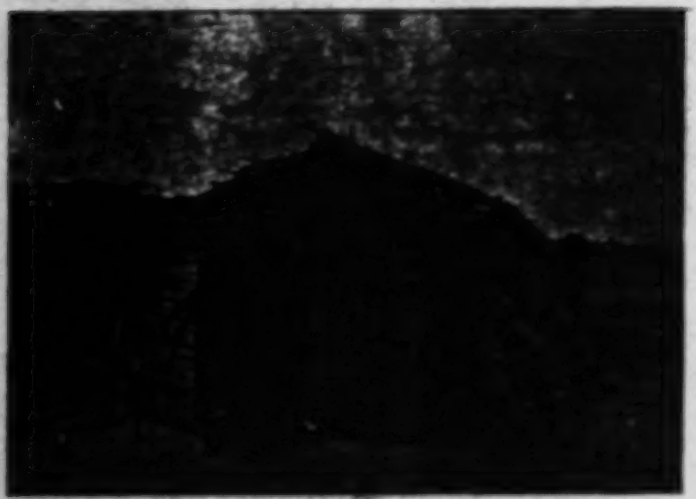

Fig. 33. Temporary Hut of the Bokala-Yaelima.

its radius varies from one to one and a half meters. Its edges are straight, the thongs by which it hangs are attached to the six corners of the hexagon, and it is made entirely in an open-work weave like that [50] of the caned chairs of Europe, a special technique of which we found no other instances in the region. No less interesting are the chairs, relatively rare among the Batitu, common among the Bokala, and in daily use among the Yaelima. Their special form is characteristic. The natives sometimes take the utmost care to ornament them with carved designs, and the remarkably artistic appearance of certain ones

1: Maes--34 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32

Yaelima
Mongo

give them in general a very interesting local ethnic character. One might say as much of the carved wooden cups, the engraved horns, and the vessels of artistically worked wood which up to now have been regarded as local to the region occupied by the Bakuba [Kuba] and which are found throughout the territory south of Wumbuli.

As a rule, the hut of the Bena Dibele-Kole region is much trimmer, it is constructed much more carefully, and the work is accomplished with order and method. The shape is rectangular, the roof has a double slope, and the ridgepole is slightly arched. This curve, however slight, is nevertheless quite characteristic

Fig. 34. (1) Bankutu-Bakuba Hut under Construction.
(2) Completed Bankutu-Bankuba Hut.

and quite constant. It is undeniably reminiscent of the typical form of the ancestral hut.

The door is located either on the side or in the gable wall, according to whether the hut is oriented parallel or perpendicular to

[395] great ceremonies because they lack the necessary wealth.
[396] The bomɛtsa is never nkɔndɛ. But before he makes one of his wives a nkɔndɛ a husband must ask the advice and approval of the bomɛtsa. For that purpose he presents her with a bompɛngɛ (a dog, [391] a goat, some rings), which expresses his recognition of her right and authority and at the same time is intended to secure a favorable response. If the bomɛtsa does not agree, the matter is not followed through. But that situation is only hypothetical. In practice the bomɛtsa yields to her husband's preferences, since he has recognized her rights in the proper fashion.

When a husband wants to create a nkɔndɛ, he first makes all the preparations, brews the sugar-cane beer and collects all the riches that are to be distributed. Then he invites the neighboring villages and calls together his relatives. On the assigned day, the assembly having gathered, the chosen wife puts on her most beautiful garments and adorns herself with her richest ornaments. She [392] seats herself on a magnificent bofinga [345] (a portable couch) (1)

1. See the excellent drawing in Engels, Les Wangata [The Wangata], (Revue Congolaise, Vol. 1, no. 4, p. 483, 1910).

in front of the audience. Her husband then announces to those assembled that henceforth this woman is to be his favorite; woe unto the man who has the temerity to seduce her or even show affection toward her -- he will be a dead man (or he will have to pay an [394] enormous indemnity of 25 to 50 bakonga). In the past it often happened that a seducer was killed or reduced to slavery without further ado. When the husband has paid 25 rings or more to the wife's family and gifts have been distributed to the assembled patriarchs, his words are ratified by the assembly, and henceforth the contract between them and the husband is sealed. Dances, song, and drink follow.

The favorite wears no special garb. She wears the same [393] clothing as all the other women and wears furs only for dances.

Incontinence is severely punished by the deceased; she
165 molests the culprit and even drags him or another person who is in mourning to the grave.

The severity of the seclusion is lessened at the time of the
● [352] ceremony which marks the widower's return to a small bed raised
[71] above the ground. It is made from tree trunks or branches in the manner of the Batswá. The widower is washed by the deceased's elder sister and then is led to the bed by his elder brother's wife. He receives a knife from his father, and from then on is permitted to perform his usual tasks.

A widower (or widow) must purchase gradual dispensations from prohibitions of foods, in contrast to relatives, who are simply released (Coutumes funéraires [Funeral Customs], Vol. 2, no. 2, E). This distinction shows the fundamental difference that exists between mourning for a spouse and for a relative. In the first instance, it is a strict social obligation from which he can be absolved only by a purchase, a compensation, or commutation of sorts; in the second instance, it is a convention from which a person is freed without any ceremony or compensation. The fact that this regulation is extended to the close relatives of the widower (or widow) does not lessen the validity of this conclusion. On the contrary, it corroborates it. For [421] the persons to whom the rule applies remain clearly in the affinal line; the regulation is never extended to relatives of the deceased.

After the death of a husband, his widows and the wives of his close relatives buy dispensations from the deceased's kinswomen. After a wife's death, the husband and his close relatives buy them from their own wives. The total amount of the purchase made by all the persons involved must be divided. Half goes to the women who have married into the clan; the other half is kept for the family of the deceased.

Like all periods of mourning, that of the widower -- with all the regulations and prohibitions involved -- ends in a great feast. When the family of the deceased have performed their duties, they organize a second feast at their own home, and the widower is

Nkundu
Pygmies FO4
Batswa

M 765 587 marriage after the end of mourning, they have the right to accept various foods and firewood from them. But a rather dim view is taken of these services rendered by strangers, that is, by persons not related to the heirs. For theoretically the widows belong to the heirs and are their wives, since the financial marriage agreement continues. (2) Nevertheless, if these men are not at enmity

2. See Chapter III, Article IX.

with the heirs, they encounter no opposition. For once the period of seclusion is terminated, the widows are free to go back to their respective families and be taken in marriage by anyone able to pay the bride price. Nevertheless, suitors are not permitted to enter the seclusion hut even in the last period. They must therefore transmit presents through the agency of the bóónanyí (sing. eónanyí), that is, the relatives of the deceased.

M 765 M P [952] [519] This last period begins with the ceremony of being lifted off the ground. The widows are made to get up onto the beóngá -- [423] bákondeja bituka ndá beóngá. The beóngá consist of split branches of the parasol tree, placed on long branches, which are in turn attached to posts, forming a small primitive bed, which is the usual bed of the Batswá that is sometimes also used by the Baoto, if the latter have nothing better. From then on the widows can rest on these; they may "rise from the ground." The parasol tree branches are called beóngá (sing. boóngá), "dead, dry wood." The same root is also used with other prefixes: eóngá, pl. bióngá; loóngá, pl. mbóngá. The verbs used are íta, "to split, rend" or fanja, "to cut." Nowadays the severity of this custom is mitigated by the substitution of beánga, transportable wicker beds, for the beóngá.

The ceremony is accompanied by a few dances and a bit of beer. The head of the family addresses the widows as follows: "We have split beóngá for you; climb up on them." Then he presents them with a few hens, given by relatives of the deceased. The widows prepare them and eat them all.

202 198 Bansele nsele ba nkanga, "The one always screaming who is followed into the high grass, the strong branch, the districts go along with the priest (Father).

1. The missionary is seen here as a witch doctor (bansele nsele ba nkanga is a general lokole name for the Negro witch doctor), who, like the Negro doctor, is looked upon as a doctor and a priest.

2. Bofala boki ndaki lisako nda lokombe [sic]. The priest, because he is always seeking converts everywhere, is here compared with an antelope which, when it is followed, runs around and around in the high grass.

3. Etafe bolo. The missionary is here compared with a strong branch. He is strong because he is influential and highly regarded by the Negroes.

4. Benanga bekendaka la mperu. The districts all go along with the Father (priest). They all follow his instructions.

The nkombo of the Protestant Anglican missionary is as follows:

Bofanga sembola bonanga boso nkenda l'inglese.

"The fishing net is spread out; the country goes along with the Englishman."

In the same way as the fishing net cordons off a part of the river and everything is caught in it, so all the people go along with the Englishman. The Protestant Anglican missionary was in this district [197] before the arrival of the Catholic missionary, so this nkombo refers, of course, to this period. Since the arrival of the Catholic missionary, the situation has changed completely in this district.

These few examples give an indication of the difficulty in understanding the lokole language.

●352 322 In addition, the Negro makes a few chairs, the most important of which is the lyeko ia mpaka, the chair for the elder, a three-legged affair with two props under it, topped with a piece out of the umbrella tree; into this the elder can throw himself as lazily as he wishes.

Then there is the so-called ebonga, a little stool chopped out of a block of wood with the native axe. This is finished off attractively with an esumwa, a small paring chisel, and the seat is decorated around the edge with studs which have been bought in some factory or other.

352
322 [103] Occasionally one sees a native stool, made as described above, but with a kind of back rest chopped out of one piece.

342
177 The Negro who wishes to move with the times makes for his house a chair out of bamboo in the European style: some sticks stuck in the ground, a mat of split bamboo laid over them, and the gentleman can spend his days in dolce far niente [pleasant idleness].

352
322 A table made in the same way (otherwise unknown to the Negro) completes the furnishing of his hut.

One does not need to be an expert, either, in order to be able to make a Negro bed. Some straight sticks are chopped out of the mombambo (umbrella tree). These are placed lengthwise and then across, on top of each other, trimmed a bit at the edges so that the whole thing fits more or less, and it is then bound together with some split lianas. In this way the Negro has made a bed; this favorite [435] piece of furniture is finished for a sale price of 5 to 10 mitako.

The making of beds could be classed among the Mongo trades. [437] I once saw, in the interior, ten of these beds, large and small spread out along the side of the road for sale.

I was assured that the owner of the beds was the very best bed-maker of the village. Of course, I raised my hat to such an important personage.

The ekoba, the bed stool, is also indispensable. These ekoba take the place of our pillows and are made of one piece, formed to the shape of the head. It is a somewhat hard pillow, but the Negro head is hard and can put up with it; the fellow sleeps without having to be rocked.

322
252 To prepare his food he needs some mortars and pestles, and these are made of wood. He uses hardwood for these utensils so that the mortars do not wear away from the constant pounding.

In addition, the Negro makes his oars, his bow and arrows for
322 the hunt, and the lokombi. The lokombi is a flat, oblong, hollowed
534 block of wood over which some pegs are stretched [sic]. He plucks these with his fingers, thus producing a monotonous sound. This so-called musical instrument is the constant companion of the young man and accompanies him on his long treks through the Evenaar forest and on his visits to friends and acquaintances.

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba

inches long and two inches in width, numbering up to seven are brought and attached to the back of her *lombe* by folding them over it.[1]

The first male child which was born to the *nkumu* before he acceded to the office is known as *Iyumi Nkui*. If he has none, then the right to this name passes to the first male child to be born to his younger brothers. Any child born on the day that the *nkumu* is given his *mentule* is also called *Iyumi*; if a male he will be *Mole Iyumi*, if a female, *Mpombe Iyumi*.[2] These children must not see the *nkumu* until they are old enough to know his name and greet him properly, and so they are taken to some village other than the one in which he has his residence. When such children are considered old enough to take up residence in the village of the *nkumu* it is an occasion for revelry, a big dance, *mbolo*, is held, and there is a feast. The child, *Iyumi*, is brought to the village of the *nkumu* with rejoicing, and this is a signal for everybody desiring to do so to help himself to anything belonging to the *nkumu*. Goats and fowls may be killed and eaten, sugar-cane rooted up, bananas, plantains, and other crops growing near by seized for food. Because of this custom the *nkumu* will take precautions and send his livestock, at least, off to some other village in order not to lose more than he can help.[3]

The *nyumba*, the singer or singers, and the *ntetii*, the penisers already mentioned, remain with the *nkumu* during his period of seclusion. Added to these is *nyumba lokombi*, the bearer of the *lokombi*, a stringed instrument played with the fingers, similar to a bass viol in its general appearance.

Inside the *ipumu* during the seclusion of the *nkumu*, few people have the right of entrance, but as one enters the *ekunga* where the daylight hours are spent, one finds the couch of the *nkumu* on the left and towards the rear. On the same side and towards the front are seated the *nyumba lokombi* and the *nyumba*. *Nsumi*'s couch is to the right of, and parallel to, that of the *nkumu*, but still to the left of the centre posts. To the right of her couch is the fire in the centre, and beyond the fire on the right side is a couch for the *mumi*, likewise somewhat to the rear, with a space in front for the *ntetii*.

The month's seclusion being completed, the *nkumu* prepares to buy the homage of the village. *Nsumi* gets rid of her decorative colours, and assumes ordinary attire, becoming like any other of the wives, and is ready to take up all the usual duties of a wife, whether in the garden or at the house. The people are called to come and render to the *nkumu* their homage and praise. The men come to the *ipumu*, are admitted to the presence of their *nkumu* and seat themselves on the bare earth with their legs wide apart and facing him. They then, without uttering a word, greet him in the

[1] The *lombe* is a belt which used to be worn by Tumba women encircling the buttocks, and this was used to attach their only garment, the *ekwe* among the Bongindo, this being a short loin cloth, or an *ejenge* among other groups, this being a woven cloth strip worn between the legs.

[2] When a new *nkumu* assumes office, one already in office will take this opportunity of getting rid of his own named *Iyumi*. He takes them to the *mentule* of the new *nkumu*, and having placed a bracelet of cowrie shells on the right wrist, and sometimes one on the right ankle, asks the number of the *mentule* whose right it is to give every day *mentule* to name these sons *Mumi* (pl. of '*Iyumi*'). This man will then take each a son, and presenting him to the people introduces him by giving him a name, and following with praise as, '*Our Iyumi Lomon, hurrah!*' and the crowd replies with the customary '*Bumi!*'

[3] It is well to remember that not every individual bearing names associated with the institution of the *nkumu* is directly connected with it. With the practice of 'resuscitating' dead relatives by naming new-born children after them, such names as these become widespread.

An *nkumu* can never walk alone, but must always be accompanied by others, and on no occasion whatsoever may he run. Even though he never washes, if he is out in the rain and sees everybody else hurrying for shelter, he will not quicken his pace. His movements must be slow and deliberate. The *nkumu* never sleeps alone; waking and sleeping he is attended by someone. But apart from this he is free to go where he wishes. The *nkumu* is not indiscriminate, as others may be, in his private habits, but must use his own latrine at all times, and if travelling must have his own latrine in each place where he stays. The inland *nkumu* frequently take advantage of this custom by hiding their accumulated brass rods at the bottom of a freshly dug latrine. Such hidden wealth will be acquired by an inheritor at the decease of the *nkumu*.

In speaking of himself the *nkumu* never refers to himself by his title but always by his own name.

The couch upon which the *nkumu* sits or reclines during the daytime may not be shared indiscriminately with others, but those permitted to sit upon it at the same time as the *nkumu* are *mumi*, women, and Batwa. The reservation of this couch for the use of the *nkumu* is not surprising, but the exceptions are. One explanation given was that women and Batwa are not *bato ba nsa*, persons in particular; they do not count for anything in the social life of the community; they are not really 'people'. Another explanation was that they do not pay fines, this being tantamount to saying that they are exempt from laws and therefore cannot break laws even by doing what would be for others an illegal act. The stool of the *nkumu*, however, has closer restrictions in the manner of its use. Besides the *nkumu* only two others may sit upon it, *Nsasa* and *Mpenge*. It is always carried by one of his wives, though not necessarily by any special one.

The restrictions concerning the food of the *nkumu* are many. He may eat food only in his own house, or, if on a journey, in one given over for his use. He may not enter another house to partake of food even if invited to do so. Likewise the *nkumu* may not eat in the forest, or eat or drink anywhere along the road when on a journey, but must wait until he arrives at a village and has a house at his disposal in order to partake of food and drink. He never 'sleeps with hunger'; even if a wife or child should die causing him great sorrow he must partake of food before going to sleep. The Bonginda *nkumu* must never go into mourning, and death must be ignored by them, but the inland *nkumu* are permitted to mourn. All food carried to an *nkumu* must be covered, this rule even applying to water. Food must not be placed in a basket with high sides (*ekoko*), but in a shallow one (*mpale*), and no food that has been kept overnight in a pot may be eaten by him: swelling of the abdomen will result. Various foods are taboo, among these all fast-moving snakes, though slow-moving ones may be eaten; light-coloured palm-nuts may not be eaten, and a variety of yam known as *nsukidi* is shunned, for it is with the tough stems of the *nsukidi* that the dying body of the *nkumu* will be bound to ensure the sitting posture necessary for burial.

Among regulations roughly classed as social, we have already covered several in references above, and have referred to the *nkumu* in council. It may be added here that he is expected to agree with the majority of the councillors and not fall out with them. The rules affecting the *nsapo* of the *nkumu* are accompanied by severe penalties. There must not be any fighting; if anger is aroused to the point of blows the antagonists